


Why the hermeneutic wager

Richard B. Hovey 

Volume 11, Number 1S, Supplement, 2024

Congress 2023

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1110255ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.26443/ijwpc.v11i1.415>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

McGill University Library

ISSN

2291-918X (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this document

Hovey, R. (2024). Why the hermeneutic wager. *The International Journal of Whole Person Care*, 11(1S), s47–s47. <https://doi.org/10.26443/ijwpc.v11i1.415>

© Richard B. Hovey, 2024



This document is protected by copyright law. Use of the services of Érudit (including reproduction) is subject to its terms and conditions, which can be viewed online.

<https://apropos.erudit.org/en/users/policy-on-use/>

érudit

This article is disseminated and preserved by Érudit.

Érudit is a non-profit inter-university consortium of the Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and the Université du Québec à Montréal. Its mission is to promote and disseminate research.

<https://www.erudit.org/en/>

POSTER

WHY THE HERMENEUTIC WAGER

Richard B. Hovey

Faculty of Dental Medicine and Oral Health Sciences, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
richard.hovey@mcgill.ca

Keywords: Hermeneutic wager, Whole person care

While progressing through my ongoing cancer treatments, in particular the reflection or re-reflections guided by Richard Kearney's hermeneutic wager. I prefer a wager over the traditional cancer metaphors because it replaces the blatant harshness of a battle in a war. I am not saying in any way of form to be a passive observer during one's cancer treatment journey, but to replace the winner-looser paradigm with carnage associated with war, shrapnel dismembered bodies unrecognizable to themselves and others. This does not mean that I am not standing up to and confronting cancer with vigor and intensity.

The wager offers dignity during participation where all the "cards" are dealt from both the cancer and the treatments with the integrity of the whole person who is living with cancer with their healthcare team and family play together as a community to successfully support the wager's cause. The wager is respectful and addresses the risks involved and is fully conscientious of outcomes as an unpredictable event. This wager is comprised of five reflections and/or conversations to engage in that I have adapted to learn about living with cancer and its treatments. The hermeneutic wager has five points of reflection: imagination, humility, commitment, discernment, and hospitality. These will be used to provide examples of how to offer insight into one's experiences. Through these kinds of reflections on cancer, uncertainty can help us develop wings for the journey into the unknown uncertainty that often a diagnosis of cancer requires. ■